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Activities of the Department of Public Information: news services

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/96 B, provides a summary of the key advances made by the Department of Public Information from August 2014 to March 2015 in promoting the work of the United Nations to the global audience through its news services.

As part of its news services, which is one of three subprogrammes of the Department and implemented by its News and Media Division, the Department strengthens support for the United Nations by enhancing the quality, format and timeliness of information products on the Organization, and for increasing the geographic range and frequency of use of its products by media outlets and other users.

The activities under the other subprogrammes of the Department, namely strategic communications services and outreach and knowledge services, are described in separate reports of the Secretary-General (A/AC.198/2015/2 and A/AC.198/2015/4, respectively).

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 69/96 B, the General Assembly took note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Department of Public Information submitted for consideration by the Committee on Information at its thirty-sixth session (A/AC.198/2014/2-4), and requested the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Committee on the activities of the Department.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly called upon the Department to provide specific information on a number of its activities. The Bureau of the Committee on Information advised the Department to present the requested information in three parts, in accordance with the three subprogrammes of the Department: strategic communications services, news services and outreach services.

3. The present report, which covers the news- and media-related activities of the Department, highlights progress made in the area of radio, television, video, photographic, print and Internet services to media and other users globally. There is a particular focus in the report on the use of multilingualism on the Department's website and in new media, including YouTube, Weibo and Facebook.

4. Unless otherwise indicated, the report covers the activities of the Department for the period from August 2014 to March 2015.

II. News services

A. Overview

5. During the reporting period, the Department focused on consolidating and expanding partnerships, as well as on developing cutting-edge technologies, not only to package and deliver news in a quicker, more relevant and more accessible way but also to expand the impact and effectiveness of its news products. This was done for all media, including radio, television, online news and web services. The Department also sought to enhance evaluation and reporting methods.

6. With the large-scale outbreak of the Ebola virus in 2014, coverage by the news services of the Department became one of the most important means of showcasing United Nations system-wide efforts to respond to the crisis. The Department's news coverage provided comprehensive information on what was being done across the affected countries and the challenges that remained. Given that multiple agencies of the United Nations system were involved and that the first-ever United Nations emergency health mission had been created, coordinating and providing a single source of authoritative United Nations information in all languages became a primary focus of the Department. Through radio broadcasts in all six official languages, as well as Kiswahili and Portuguese, News Centre stories in the six official languages, packages for television broadcasters from UNifeed, and a website created for this purpose, the Department's news teams were actively engaged in informing the world of the international community's response. Multiple news stories, together with features, interviews, photo galleries, live feeds from press conferences and audio and video clips, were posted on a daily basis. United

Nations coverage also highlighted the Member States' contribution to the fight against the disease.

7. The news and content teams of the Department also worked closely across all platforms to create stories and to curate a historic collection of photos and videos and make them available for the forthcoming seventieth anniversary multilingual website. United Nations Radio and United Nations News Centres are developing content to be added to the page and further disseminated through traditional and new media platforms. The Television Section worked closely with the mayor of The Hague to bring "UNEarth", a major exhibition of United Nations-produced visual content (photos, posters, video and film), to the city's main art museum, Gemeentemuseum. The photo exhibition "We the peoples", curated in collaboration with an external partner, was exhibited at the prestigious 2014 Photokina trade show in Germany and has been on tour to Japan and Pakistan, with more locations to come.

B. United Nations Radio

8. United Nations Radio continued efforts to use traditional and new technologies to reach the widest possible audiences in different regions of the world. It entered into new partnership arrangements with broadcasters, expanded its presence through online news and magazine outlets, entered into collaborative arrangements with radio programming in peacekeeping missions and developed more innovative approaches for programme dissemination, such as through handheld devices.

9. Among the issues that United Nations Radio covered extensively during the reporting period were those related to climate change, peace and security, the Syrian crisis, the crisis in Ukraine and Ebola. This content was also widely disseminated through social media platforms.

10. In addition, United Nations Radio sent staff to cover several major conferences, such as the first Global Forum on Youth Policies, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, in October, and the Second International Conference on Nutrition, held at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome in November, successfully producing broadcast audio material in multiple languages.

11. In fulfilling the Department's multilingualism mandate, United Nations Radio continued to establish partners to broadcast their programmes in all languages. The Portuguese Unit established more than 20 new partnership agreements in 2014, including with major outlets such as *Brasil Post* (the Brazilian edition of *The Huffington Post*), *Metro* and *Marie Claire*. Elsewhere in the lusophone world, other important partners included *O País* in Angola, Rádio Capital in Mozambique, and the Portuguese television news channel TVI. In December 2014, the Unit established a cooperation agreement with the Portuguese-language news site IG, which has more than 13 million users in Brazil and in other lusophone countries.

12. During the general debate of the General Assembly, the Chinese Unit conducted numerous live link-ups with China National Radio, which were featured several times in the latter's prime-time national broadcast and received positive feedback from listeners in China. Meanwhile, the Chinese Unit's Weibo account had attracted 720,000 followers by the end of December 2014.

13. The English Unit's social media presence on Facebook more than doubled from December 2013 to December 2014. Increased social media interaction drove more traffic to the website: in December 2014, there were 351,510 page downloads, compared with 185,670 in December 2013. New partners included Polish Radio, Radio Havana in Cuba, Uganda Radio Network and Bernama Radio 24 in Malaysia, as well as specialized audio/radio networks focused on agricultural and religious issues and many university radio stations in the United States of America.

14. The output of the Spanish Unit garnered tremendous interest, with more than 1,500 downloads per day from users around the world during the peak period of the General Assembly. The stories that elicited the most interest were those related to United Nations involvement in crises worldwide, such as the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Ebola outbreak and the high-level segment of the General Assembly.

15. The crisis in Ukraine was widely covered by United Nations Radio, especially by the Russian Unit. Given the intense regional preoccupation with this topic, interest was at an all-time high in news stories, interviews and features covering United Nations efforts to resolve the crisis in Eastern Ukraine and to provide humanitarian assistance to the population in need. From April to December 2014, about 225 news stories, interviews and features on the crisis in Eastern Ukraine were published, garnering 30,000 page views.

16. Over the course of the past year, the Arabic Unit covered various events related to the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, in addition to focusing on the daily plight of the Palestinian people. The detailed coverage of the continuing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and the emergence of the group Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant were all closely followed by audiences in the region. Dealing with a wide range of issues, including social and economic concerns and coverage of the ongoing debate over the Middle East, more than 400 items were produced on the question of Palestine alone, generating more than 270,000 page views and thousands of social media hits.

17. Given the importance of social media in disseminating news, United Nations Radio units were able to secure a partnership with SoundCloud, a Swedish online audio distribution platform that enables users to upload, record, promote and share their originally created content. This medium allows teams to share audio with followers and to immediately track any new hit on any story, enabling United Nations Radio units to evaluate the reach of their programming and the reaction of their audience.

18. Between January and December 2014, the Kiswahili Unit managed to increase the number of broadcasting partners by six, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, thus broadening its reach in the target areas. The number of Facebook page "likes" also increased by 159.5 per cent compared with 2013, and the number of Twitter followers went up by 75 per cent. Even though technology is still a challenge to many in the target areas, there was progress, as the number of page downloads rose from 39,425 in 2013 to 57,797 in 2014.

19. In response to the request made by the Committee for information about partnerships' multiplying impacts on potential audiences, the Department initiated a review of its broadcast partnerships with the aim of understanding the current reach

and usage of United Nations radio and television products. The Department found that, in 2014, visitors to the United Nations Radio websites in the six official languages and Portuguese and Kiswahili, including many broadcast partners, downloaded products approximately 2.9 million times. The United Nations Radio websites also had more than 3.2 million page views. In addition, the Department conducted a survey among its broadcast partners in the six official languages, as well as in Portuguese and Kiswahili, in order to ascertain estimates of the respective audience reach of the broadcast stations.

20. The results of the survey revealed several challenges in collecting accurate and reliable data on audience measurement, as evidenced by the lack of available data and the dissimilar methods that broadcast stations used to measure audience reach when data were available. Broadcast stations, particularly those with limited resources, faced high costs in the collection of reliable and timely audience measurement data, typically requiring the use of individual logging and telephone and Internet surveying techniques. In addition, the rapidly changing technological environment in which radio and television products were being redisseminated and rebroadcast presented difficulties for data collection efforts across multiple technological platforms, such as Internet streaming, downloads and handheld mobile device applications. The Department will continue its efforts to understand the global reach of its radio and television products through its partnerships.

21. The study also brought up the issue that at present most radio stations also had a web presence, where news and feature content was widely disseminated. In line with this practice, the Department determined that a significant volume of the online content produced by United Nations Radio units, readily available on their website, was regularly picked up and further disseminated by a large number of radio stations worldwide, many of which did not maintain a formal partnership agreement with United Nations Radio. The Department is planning a more in-depth analysis to gauge the level of information dissemination through this unregulated but common practice in order to reflect the otherwise untraced reach of its content to broad audiences around the world.

C. United Nations Television

22. The Department continued to produce video stories, both in long and short form, for worldwide dissemination through broadcast clients and, increasingly, through social media communication platforms. The video features reflect United Nations priorities: climate change, peace and security, human rights, women's issues, humanitarian aid and the Millennium Development Goals, among others. The platforms through which the videos were made available include the United Nations Television channel (also available in New York City through Time Warner Cable), United Nations webcast/Web TV, United Nations Radio, the United Nations News Centre and other internal outlets.

23. The United Nations Television Section worked closely with partners, including the United Nations Democracy Fund, the Human Security Unit of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), to produce relevant and up-to-date content from the perspective of ordinary people in real

situations, thus highlighting the activities of the Organization in the field. One of the main achievements during the reporting period was the production of a feature video and a website in close cooperation with the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat, with the participation of the Secretary-General, on Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), on preventing the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery and establishing appropriate domestic controls over related materials to prevent their illicit trafficking.

24. Several different products are currently produced in the six official languages, including *UN in Action*, *UN Stories* and *Year in Review 2014*. The latter was produced in different lengths in order to maximize distribution and reach. The flagship *21st Century* series is currently produced in Chinese, English and French, and efforts to find partners for Arabic, Russian and Spanish continue. The distribution of the entire series continues to expand, and the number of new broadcast partners increases regularly.

25. Highlighting events around the Millennium Development Goals and the proposed post-2015 sustainable development goals, United Nations Television produced, and will continue to produce, a series of videos in all six official languages in 2015. A special video containing the Secretary-General's message and bringing together a group of 15-year-olds to talk about what they can expect of the future was produced early in 2015 in connection with the post-2015 development agenda, a major priority for the Organization in 2015.

26. In connection with the Department's mandate related to the question of Palestine, a story for the *21st Century* programme was produced in December 2014 about teams of Israeli and Palestinian health workers who provide life-saving treatment to Palestinian children with heart ailments in Israel and the State of Palestine.

27. With regard to climate change, notable video productions included a video on the Climate Summit; *Namibia: The Crisis of Drought*; and *Nuclear Science and Ocean Acidification*. At the same time, the Department continued to seek video footage of the effects of sea level rise and climate-induced migration.

28. United Nations Television continued to highlight the issues faced by small island nations after the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, held in September 2014 in Samoa, including a piece on the Solomon Islands and the impact of logging on small island communities. Other stories featured the rebuilding of a Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization monitoring station after a tsunami in Robinson Crusoe Island, Chile; a story on saving the Pacific's tuna, a source of livelihood for many small islanders in the region; a story on protecting the leatherback sea turtle in Trinidad and Tobago; and a story on local efforts to protect the marine environment in the Cook Islands.

29. Mindful of the sacrifice of peacekeepers, United Nations Television featured the particularly high toll in 2014 in the annual flagship video round-up *United Nations Year in Review 2014*. Furthermore, the Department will work with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat on a documentary on the subject in 2015.

30. Regarding the International Decade for People of African Descent, videos planned for the second quarter of 2015 include one on the subject of slavery in the United States and in Brazil. With regard to the mandated activities in connection

with the remembrance of slavery and the transatlantic slave tra[illegible] on the making of the Ark of Return, which will be the permanent m[illegible] : United Nations Headquarters in honour of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, and featuring its designer, Rodney Leon, will be produced in 2015.

31. Keeping abreast of evolving technologies, the Department is in the process of readying United Nations Television products to use Civolution technology, which will allow content to be digitally watermarked, thus providing information on how United Nations Television audiovisual products are being utilized by the Department's partner broadcasters around the globe. The system is designed to recognize digitally watermarked television content that is aired, and provide analytics reports on usage and dissemination.

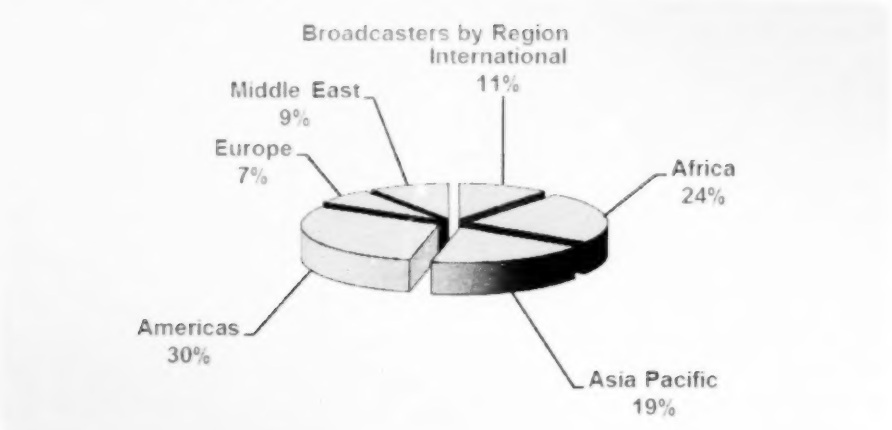
Live coverage

32. During the reporting period, United Nations Television continued to provide gavel-to-gavel, broadcast-quality live feeds to broadcasters around the world of the meetings of the General Assembly, the Security Council and other intergovernmental bodies and major events, as well as press conferences and encounters at Headquarters in New York and the United Nations Office at Geneva. International conferences sponsored by United Nations system organizations were also covered. The feeds of United Nations Television live coverage were made available through two major global service providers, Switch and Encompass, to a worldwide television network. Coverage is also available through the United Nations Television channel on Time Warner Cable in New York and through United Nations webcast live video streaming. During the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly, in 2014, United Nations Television covered 139 events, including the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, the special session of the General Assembly on the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014 and the Climate Summit, with simultaneous live feeds of events.

UNifeed

33. UNifeed continued to deliver video news stories six days a week through Associated Press Television to more than 1,000 broadcast points globally, with content from Headquarters and more than 40 partner agencies, funds and programmes, as well as peacekeeping missions. Select stories were also distributed by Reuters TV and the European Broadcasting Union. Reuters provides video news packages to more than 650 broadcasters with a potential reach of 1 billion viewers, and the European Broadcasting Union is a confederation of 85 broadcasting organizations from 56 countries, and 37 associate broadcasters.

Figure I
UNifeed clients by region, January 2015



34. UNifeed also provided broadcast-quality videos on its website for smaller broadcasters, mostly in Africa, that are not subscribers of Associated Press Television or Reuters TV. Registered users include media professionals, government agencies, non-governmental organizations and educational institutions. On average, there were about 2,245 downloads monthly from broadcasters, an increase of 12 per cent from the previous year. Some of the downloaded UNifeed stories are redistributed further through registered users' online and social media platforms.

35. During the reporting period, UNifeed's coverage of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and the global response to the crisis received many media requests and 210 downloads, while the Syrian political and humanitarian situation and the situation in the Middle East, the Central African Republic and South Sudan remained among the most downloaded stories. The most popular general interest stories were: Climate Summit (93 downloads), Leonardo DiCaprio's speech at the United Nations (48 downloads), Ebola news wrap (46 downloads) and United Nations Disengagement Observer Force peacekeepers (45 downloads).

Webcasting

36. The Department continues to improve and expand the Organization's live and on-demand webcast services to directly reach a global audience on multiple web platforms, including through wireless mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets. The United Nations Web TV website has been one of the most visited United Nations websites. In 2014, the website received more than 21 million video views from more than 220 countries and territories, a 24 per cent increase from 2013.

37. Videos from United Nations Web TV are embedded on many news platforms, including United Nations Radio and the United Nations News Centre, making content available to multiple audiences in multiple languages. In addition, active efforts continue to ensure that events at the United Nations, including Security Council meetings, the Climate Summit and the general debate of the General

Assembly, can be followed in real time around the world in the six official languages.

38. Moreover, the Department facilitates webcast coverage at Human Rights Council meetings, press briefings held at the United Nations Office at Geneva and trials and hearings at the International Court of Justice in The Hague through the United Nations Web TV website.

39. In 2014, the Department provided webcast coverage of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Forum held in Bali, Indonesia, in August 2014, the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, held in Apia in September 2014, and the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, held in Vienna in November 2014.

40. The YouTube channel of the United Nations exceeded 14 million video views, a 40 per cent increase from 2014; the number of subscribers to the channel grew to more than 65,000, a 38 per cent increase. To enhance site usability and user engagement, special playlists were created, including for videos in different languages. Users were encouraged to comment on videos and to share their views on issues of concern.

D. Photos and audiovisual archives

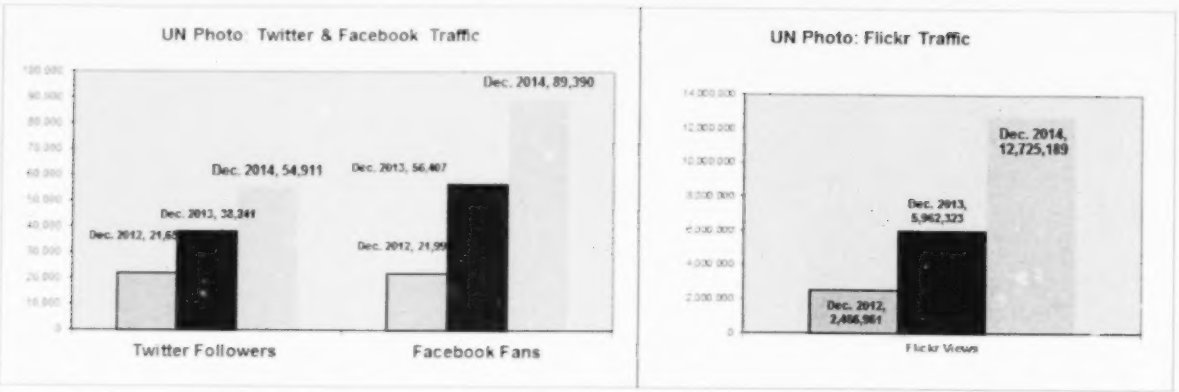
United Nations Photo

41. At least 1,421 assignments were undertaken during the period under review, including 35 trips by the Secretary-General, resulting in approximately 6,500 images being selected and made available to the public in high resolution on the United Nations Photo website. In total, about 26,200 images were added to the photo database. This reflects an increase of approximately 30 per cent from the previous reporting period, despite the adoption of a tighter selection policy for images to be included into the database.

42. Visitors from more than 200 countries and territories downloaded more than 89,000 photos in high resolution for further publication and distribution and other uses. This represents an increase of 48 per cent compared with the previous reporting period, as clients become increasingly familiar with downloading from the United Nations Photo website. As a result, the Photo Library had to provide fewer images manually. Nonetheless, the manual service is still in high demand, with an additional 13,000 images being provided through file transfer protocol (FTP) or e-mailed upon request to permanent missions to the United Nations and members of the public.

43. The United Nations Photo website registered more than 3.2 million unique page views during the reporting period, a 24 per cent increase, and its social media channels continued to be a popular place for users to find United Nations Photo content, with increases across the board in Flickr views, Facebook likes and Twitter followers (see fig. II).

Figure II
United Nations Photo content on social media platforms



44. To support the Organization's Ebola crisis response, the Photo Unit and Library highlighted coverage of the topic, from both Headquarters and the field. More than 1,000 images were added to the database, of which close to 500 were archived, captioned and posted to a special spotlight gallery, and subsequently featured on social media streams (see fig. III).

Figure III
United Nations Photo website featuring the Ebola emergency response gallery

The first-ever United Nations emergency health mission, the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response was set up in response to the unprecedented outbreak. The Mission is temporary and responds to immediate needs related to the fight against Ebola, which had been reported in more than 20,171 people and killed 7,890 as at 28 December 2014, according to the World Health Organization.

45. In addition to current news coverage, the Department continued to make historic photos available to the public in digital format and to pursue partnerships with both internal and external clients. One such partnership, with the International Photographic Council, resulted in the "We the peoples" photo exhibition (see fig. IV).

Figure IV
"We the peoples" exhibition featured on the United Nations Photo website

United Nations Day on 24 October 2014 marks the start of the seventieth year of the Organization. United Nations Photo is pleased to present "We the peoples", an exhibition celebrating the United Nations through powerful images of people, both of United Nations workers and the individuals they serve each day. Taking its title from the opening line of the Charter of the United Nations, the exhibition hopes to tell the story of United Nations ideals, successes and challenges for the past seven decades. The exhibition is on tour and has been to Germany, Japan and Pakistan.

Audiovisual archives and library services

46. During the reporting period, while stressing the importance of access to and long-term preservation of the Organization's audiovisual archives, the Department continued to look for donors and to raise awareness of the urgent need to digitize seven decades of materials for long-term preservation, access and sustainable management.

47. According to major professional associations and experts in the field of audiovisual preservation, if analog collections are not digitized by the year 2028, they will be irreversibly lost. In this regard, the Department has prepared a detailed fundraising proposal and continued its efforts to reach out to potential donors to raise funds for mass or partial digitization. The proposal stressed the needs, goals and deliverables of the project, which would enable the Department to digitize the entire United Nations audiovisual collection, comprising historic photographs, films, and video and audio recordings representing the audiovisual heritage of the Organization. The proposal has been presented to a number of interested Member States, international broadcasters, foundations and other entities. The Department will continue its efforts to seek creative partnerships that will bring the funding or technical expertise necessary for the sustainable management of the Organization's audiovisual archives.

48. The Department continued to use the media asset management system as a primary source of video and audio recordings for the production of its news and media stories. The system also archives all United Nations digital audio and video official recordings, including the related metadata necessary for effective search and discovery.

49. The Audiovisual Library has migrated some 95,000 legacy metadata records from a tape management system into the media asset management system. The records will eventually be linked to the media assets as they are digitized. Since the implementation of the system in June 2013, access to daily events coverage, as well as to archives, has become easier and more efficient: fulfilling a request for

digitized media may take only minutes, instead of hours or days in a non-digital environment. Nonetheless, the full benefit of the system will be realized only when all legacy audiovisual archives are digitized, catalogued, checked for quality control and ingested into the system.

50. The Department has also developed an automatic distribution system that has improved the distribution of high-resolution video and audio on demand in more efficient processes. Today, all content in the media asset management system may be distributed on demand to a worldwide audience in any of the available languages. The Department has also pursued partnership with and the cooperation of the Archives and Records Management Section, the Broadcast and Conference Support Section and the Office of Information and Communications Technology of the Department of Management to address the requirements for long-term preservation and accessibility of these audiovisual records. Standard operating procedures and policies still need to be refined and implemented by all the stakeholders in order to improve the system. The Department has launched a revamped Audiovisual Library website platform where one can find audio and video recordings of daily meetings and events coverage, including press conferences, stake-outs and other events happening in New York and around the world. The website platform also offers selected historic audio, film or video recordings from a wide range of media from the United Nations audiovisual collection. High-resolution content is delivered on demand, which also includes content in all six official languages, depending on availability.

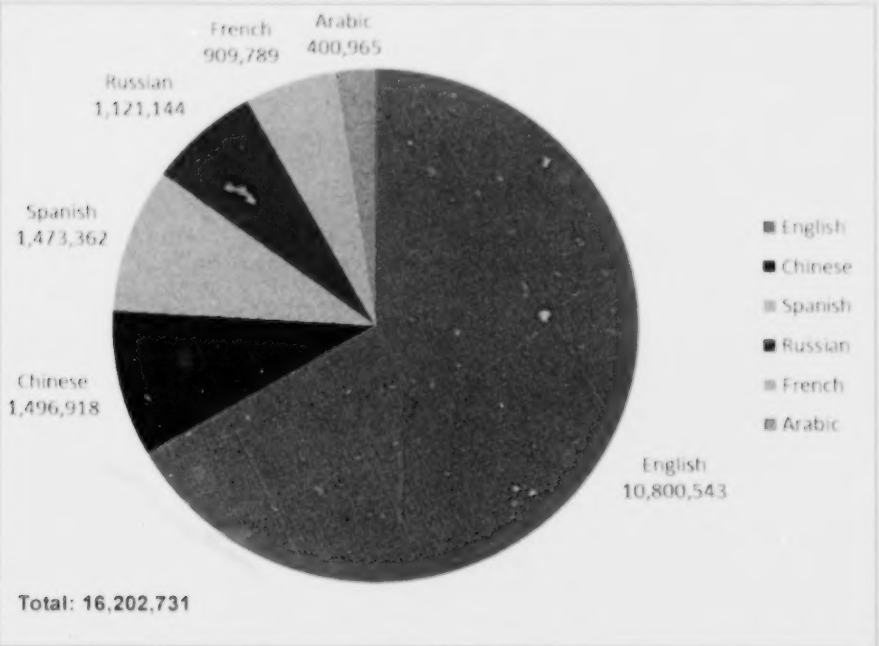
51. The Department reiterates the need for a sound backup system to the media asset management system, as well as the implementation of long-term audiovisual archives migration policies and procedures for digital preservation, which will have to be put in place in order to support a sustainable and compliant open archives information system.

E. United Nations News Centre

52. The multilingual United Nations News Centre web portal continued to provide timely, accurate and balanced news coverage of the latest developments in the United Nations system in all official languages, as well as a range of multimedia content and in-depth resources. In doing so, it coordinated with the relevant substantive offices, including the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General, and a range of information networks in New York and around the world.

53. During the reporting period, the United Nations News Centres in all six official languages saw increases in one or more performance indicators; the Russian-language portal saw the most dramatic relative improvement, with page views rising by 142 per cent, from 462,373 in 2013 to 1,121,144 in 2014, and the number of Russian users climbed by 175 per cent compared with 2013. The English portal experienced a 13 per cent rise in page views and a 20 per cent gain in users compared with the same period in the previous year. Meanwhile, the six language News Centres combined accounted for more than 16 million page views, representing more than 11 per cent of all page views for the entire United Nations website (see fig. V).

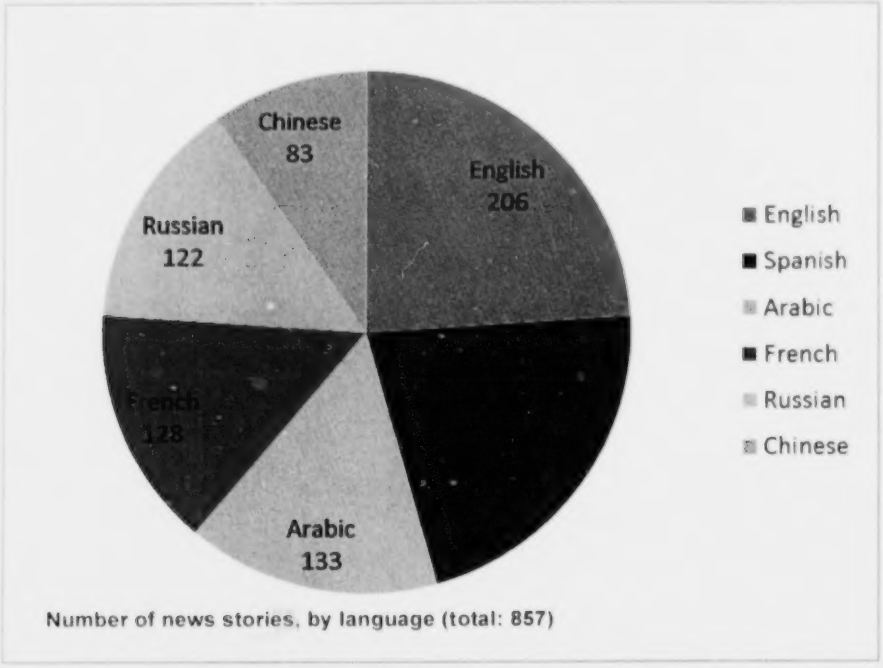
Figure V
United Nations News Centre page views by language, January-December 2014



54. In addition to breaking news, the United Nations News Centre covered a broad range of issues and developments, from peace and security crises to sustainable development and human rights. It played a critical role in the communication efforts related to the Ebola outbreak that began in mid-2014, including through daily news stories, interviews with senior United Nations officials working on the global response, feature stories and an Ebola segment nearly every week in the *This Week at the UN* video series (see fig. VI).

Figure VI

United Nations News Centre coverage of the Ebola outbreak, by language, January-December 2014



55. The impact of renewed conflict in Gaza, which started in July but spilled into August, was given intensive and daily coverage by the News Centre. United Nations sources served as an important and authoritative source of information for Member States, civil society and other media outlets on the unfolding events in the hostilities involving Israel and the State of Palestine, and News Centre stories were widely shared by political and other commentators at a time when balanced and accurate information was critical to informing audiences worldwide.

56. Building on the popularity of the *Newsmakers* series of interviews, some of those who were featured included the Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning; the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; the United Nations System Senior Coordinator for Ebola Virus Disease; the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support; and the President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development. In addition to up-to-the-minute reporting on breaking news, coverage involved feature stories, interviews, multimedia products and the compilation of resources through the portal's "News focus" pages, including on such topics as the Ebola response, the Central African Republic, Mali, South Sudan and Ukraine.

57. As for the observance of the International Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the News Centre continued to highlight issues and events related to the question of Palestine from around the United Nations system. A wide range of events to mark the International Year, briefings to the Security Council, and the

work of United Nations agencies in providing assistance to the Palestinian people were covered through news stories, interviews, videos, photos and infographics. These included a video production of the first-ever fashion show by Palestinian designer Jamal Taslaq at United Nations Headquarters.

58. The work and decisions of the General Assembly continued to feature prominently on the United Nations News Centre, not just during the annual general debate of the Assembly and all the high-level events but throughout the year. In addition to meetings and events at Headquarters, the News Centre provided coverage of United Nations conferences related to climate change (Samoa) in September, youth policies (Azerbaijan) in October and landlocked developing countries (Vienna) in November, featuring numerous interviews, feature stories and video clip products of participants. These efforts included the creation of short videos in multiple languages to explain the ground covered in important United Nations meetings and to enhance their appeal to younger audiences.

59. There was continued cooperation between the News Centre, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support in raising awareness of new realities, successes and challenges faced by peace operations worldwide, including the creation of the first-ever United Nations emergency health mission, the rehatting of the African Union mission in the Central African Republic into a United Nations operation, and ongoing attacks on peacekeepers in various hotspots.

F. Press releases

60. In accordance with paragraph 19 of resolution 68/86 B, the Department made further efforts to explore options to deliver press releases in all six official languages in a cost-neutral manner. Subsequently, prior to the adoption of resolution 69/96 B by the General Assembly, and in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the Assembly, the Secretary-General submitted a statement of programme budget implications, in particular with regard to paragraph 22 of the resolution. The Secretary-General will include the associated resources in his proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, which will be presented to Member States at the seventieth session of the Assembly.

61. As a key part of its news-related services, the Department's Meetings Coverage Section continued to provide fast, accurate and comprehensive coverage of all open intergovernmental meetings and selected press conferences at Headquarters and other locations. Between July and December 2014, the Section produced a total of 2,279 press releases, with 10,713 pages in English and French. This output comprised meetings coverage summaries (744), other press releases (1,294) and proceedings of briefings and press conferences (241).

62. Coverage was made available in hard copy at Headquarters and distributed to worldwide audiences and the United Nations information centres through a new website based on the more flexible Drupal content management platform. The coverage included:

(a) A total of 425 press releases relating to the main session of the General Assembly, including plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees, from mid-September to December 2014;

(b) A total of 500 press releases covering the Security Council, including a ministerial-level meeting on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts (foreign terrorist fighters), substantive debates on Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Somalia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, the Middle East, Ebola, post-conflict peacebuilding, children and armed conflict, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, peace and security in Africa, the international criminal tribunals, women and peace and security, and the protection of civilians, as well as press statements;

(c) At least 38 press releases on the Economic and Social Council, among them, coverage of its substantive session held at United Nations Headquarters in 2014;

(d) A total of 1,026 other press releases, including statements, remarks and messages from the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General, as well as materials from other United Nations offices and departments.

III. Other services

Services to the media: media accreditation and liaison

63. During the general debate of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly and the high-level meetings, the Department provided 2,500 media accreditations, a 60 per cent increase from the previous year. The Department also facilitated 137 photo opportunities with the Secretary-General and various dignitaries and monitored and provided logistics to 112 stake-outs, press conferences and events at United Nations Headquarters.

64. From October to December 2014, the Department's Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit provided accreditation to 347 media representatives and continued to assist the press with coverage of United Nations activities. It continued to disseminate information about United Nations events and official documents through its daily media alert, the Media Documents Centre and its Twitter account, which has more than 26,800 followers.

IV. United Nations website

65. The Department continued its efforts to streamline and require conformity with basic guidelines for websites, including with regard to accessibility and multilingualism, on the United Nations website (www.un.org). The Department provided input in this regard to the administrative instruction currently being developed regarding online accessibility of documents and content from United Nations websites and updated the online guidelines on the creation of accessible United Nations websites. The Department also tested and launched the newly redesigned United Nations website in all six official languages using the more flexible Drupal content management platform. The Web Services Section continued to work closely with the Office of Information and Communications Technology to harmonize efforts related to information technology and public information.

66. During the reporting period, the Department produced a number of new websites, keeping in mind the need to incorporate multilingualism from the planning

stages. A website in the six official languages was launched in December for the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, to be held in Qatar in April 2015.

67. In February-March 2015, the Department launched its sustainable development website in the six official languages. The website brings together issues related to poverty, prosperity and the environment, including climate change. It also aims to explain the relevance of the year 2015 as a time for global action on various United Nations processes, including negotiations for the sustainable development goals, a new climate agreement and financing for development. The website will act as an entry point for the general public to all sustainable development issues and the work of the United Nations on each of them.

68. In response to a request made by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Department is creating a new website in the six official languages promoting the United Nations film on weapons of mass destruction, dedicated to the tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Also pursuant to a request from that Office, the Department has developed a website for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in May, in the six official languages.

69. Using web development technologies, such as Drupal and WordPress, a website was developed for the President of the seventieth session of the General Assembly, while a redesigned website for the Security Council sanctions committees in all official languages was launched in the first quarter of 2015.

70. Expanding on earlier efforts welcomed by Member States, the Department covered the general debate of the General Assembly on the web through a dedicated website which, in 2014, offered videos of all speeches and summaries thereof in French and English. Between 24 September and 2 October, there was an increase of over 64 per cent in the number of visits to the United Nations website in French, compared with the same period in the previous year, which can be attributed to the online coverage in French of the annual general debate of the Assembly.

71. A new website was launched for the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa in Arabic, English and French during the reporting period, and the remaining language versions will be implemented later in 2015.

72. The Department created a website for the United Nations coordinated response to the Ebola crisis, providing an umbrella for websites on Ebola produced by other United Nations agencies and partner organizations. The site includes updated news, situation reports, data and links to approved fundraisers, with daily news and feature updates in English, French and Spanish.

73. The Department continues to support the promotion and coverage of international observances mandated by the General Assembly through dedicated websites in all official languages. New websites were launched for World Cities Day (31 October), the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists (2 November) and World Soil Day (5 December).

74. A new website was launched on 30 October in the six official languages for the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, and on 9 December a site was launched in the six official languages for the opening of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

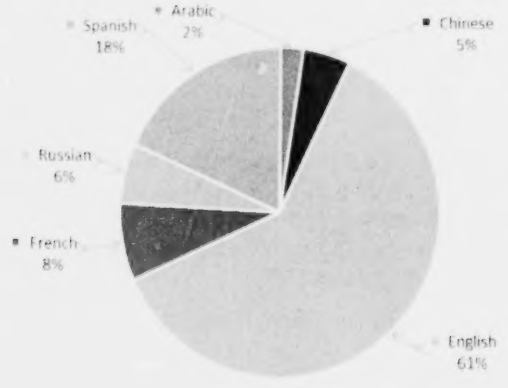
75. Working closely with the Office for Disarmament Affairs on the newly established International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (26 September), the Department created a new website in the six official languages.

76. In line with guidance from the Office of Information and Communications Technology on the adoption of a new search engine based on the open-source enterprise search platform Solr, the Department worked closely with the Office to design and implement, before the December 2014 deadline, a new search engine specific to the United Nations meetings coverage and press releases website. This was done without any disruption or loss of functionality.

United Nations website traffic by language, 1 January-30 November 2014

Language	*Sessions*	*Users*	*Page views*	*Pages per visit*
Arabic	1 233 844	882 930	3 055 914	2.48
Chinese	2 614 968	2 029 192	6 417 464	2.45
English	31 550 310	19 755 016	81 316 620	2.58
French	3 893 416	2 607 213	10 145 825	2.61
Russian	3 406 009	2 221 694	7 802 086	2.29
Spanish	11 328 502	8 332 766	24 322 534	2.15
Total	**54 027 049**	**35 828 811**	**133 060 443**	**2.43**

Figure VII
United Nations website page views by language, 1 January-30 November 2014



Multilingualism

77. The Department undertook concerted efforts to improve multilingualism through cooperative arrangements while endeavouring to maintain timeliness, standards and editorial quality control. Agreements were established with two

universities in China, Soochow University and Shanghai International Studies University, to translate content from English to Chinese. Agreements were also established with the University of Salamanca to translate content from English to Spanish, and the workflow with the University was changed to tailor it to the needs of the Department, making it more dynamic and time-sensitive.

78. The United Nations Arabic social media platforms have witnessed new highs in terms of user interest and engagement, especially during the week of the general debate of the General Assembly. The official Arabic United Nations Facebook account saw an increase of more than 100 per cent over the same period in the previous year, with more than 200,000 active followers. Similarly, the official Arabic United Nations Twitter account has experienced pronounced growth and now exceeds 100,000 followers. The Department also translated and narrated the *UN in Action* television programme in Arabic to provide visual media content that could be used in social media campaigns.

79. On Sina Weibo, a popular microblogging platform in Chinese, the United Nations has amassed 7.5 million followers, the highest among all the United Nations social media outlets. The United Nations Weibo account gets out information not only about day-to-day work but also about topical items, which are of direct interest to its followers. The coverage of Lang Lang's concert on United Nations Day garnered huge public attention on Weibo and was viewed more than 210 million times. In September 2014 alone, the Department published 198 posts in Chinese to cover the general debate of the General Assembly and the Climate Summit, which had a reach of about 458 million users and were read more than 112 million times.

80. Also on Sina Weibo, live interviews were conducted with the United Nations Resident Coordinator in China, the editor of the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2014* and the Head of the Human Development Report Office. The live interviews were reported, broadcast and quoted by media around the world, which resulted in a significantly positive impact on delivering United Nations messages to the world. Likewise, the number of subscribers to United Nations Chinese WeChat, a free messaging and calling application, has reached more than 300,000.

81. The Department launched additional United Nations accounts in three Chinese microvideo-sharing applications: Weishi, Miaopai and Meipai. More than 150 ten-second videos have been uploaded across the three applications and viewed about 200 million times. More than 1,300 United Nations videos translated into Chinese have been uploaded to the Chinese-language United Nations channels on Youku, Tudou, Sina Video and Tencent Video and garnered about 24 million views. The *This Week at the UN* video series is now available in Chinese and is promoted on Chinese social media platforms, such as Weibo, WeChat and Meipai.

82. The Department also worked in collaboration with United Nations agencies to promote organizational priorities. For instance, the Department worked with the "My world" campaign of the United Nations Development Programme to promote the "My world" survey on Weibo. Similar collaboration is under way with UN-Women to promote the "He for she" campaign.

83. Efforts were made to increase the volume of French video content available on the dedicated French United Nations YouTube channel, which now has more than 500 videos. To continue strengthening multilingualism, videos produced by the

Department, as well as those produced by other departments or United Nations agencies, were edited and translated into French for posting on the channel.

84. The Department's French Facebook account has seen an increase of 130 per cent in its fan base, while the YouTube channel in French has seen the number of views double since 2014. The Department's French Twitter account has likewise experienced strong growth of about 270 per cent in terms of the number of followers.

85. The Russian Twitter account experienced a twentyfold increase in the number of its followers, from 1,270 followers in January 2014 to 20,433 followers in January 2015. During the same period, the number of likes of the Russian Facebook account tripled. During the reporting period, the Department actively promoted United Nations videos in Russian by curating content in a dedicated Russian YouTube account.

86. The Department has undertaken a concerted effort to translate and narrate the *UN in Action* television programme in Spanish, and started a pilot project in November to adapt into Spanish the *This Week at the UN* video series, providing valuable content that can be used on United Nations Spanish social media.

87. Spanish social media have continued their pattern of steady growth, with the Spanish YouTube account registering an increase from 340,108 views to 658,770 in 2014. Similarly, the United Nations Spanish Twitter account has seen its followers more than double to 333,469, and the Facebook account has registered an almost threefold increase in fans to 272,678.

V. Conclusion

88. The Department will continue to strive to meet the growing demand for United Nations-branded products and to enhance its multimedia and multilingual content using traditional media and new platforms, with a special focus on finding previously untapped audiences through innovative partnerships. As the public changes the way in which it consumes information, the Department has already begun to reconfigure how to meet those new needs.

89. The Department has undertaken intensive efforts to train its news and content producers in multimedia techniques and to utilize the technologies offered by, for example, the media asset management system. As the demands on the Department to meet new media needs increase, it will seek to adapt by organizing capacity around languages to allow for creative solutions.

90. Understanding the invaluable historical legacy that the Organization holds in its audiovisual archives, the Department will continue to seek partnerships with Member States, institutions and private donors to digitize the audiovisual archives in the most cost-effective way possible and ensure that this heritage will be preserved for future generations.

91. In order to ensure the continued quality and quantity of programmes and to strengthen multilingualism, the Department will explore the improvement of the coordination and workflow among languages.